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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS

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DISEASE AND WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

AN EMPLOYEE WHO SUFFERS FROM LEAD POISONING IS NOT ENTITLED TO COMPENSATION UNDER THE CONNECTICUT LAW.

The Supreme Court of Errors of Connecticut has decided that the Connecticut workmen's compensation law does not provide for payments to an employee who suffers from an occupational disease.

An employee of the American Steel & Wire Co. was incapacitated for a short time by lead poisoning contracted in the course of his employment. The court decided that he was not entitled to compensation.

The opinions of Mr. Justice Beach, in delivering the decision of the court, and of Mr. Justice Wheeler, dissenting, are interesting discussions of the question presented to the court. They are published on pages 2797 to 2810 of this issue of the Public Health Reports.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER IN CALIFORNIA.

In May, 1916, Dr. Frank L. Kelly, assistant epidemiologist of the bureau of communicable diseases of the California State Board of Health, made an investigation in Modoc and Lassen Counties, Cal., to determine the prevalence and geographic distribution of Rocky Mountain spotted fever in those counties.

His report, which was made to the director of the bureau of communicable diseases of the California State Board of Health, shows that he had reports of 38 cases, 6 in Modoc County and 32 in Lassen County. The following table, the figures of which are taken from his report, shows the number of cases and the mortality by years:

Year.	Modoc County.		Lassen County.	
	Cases.	Deaths.	Cases.	Deaths.
1903	1			
1904	1	1		
1908			1	1
1909	1		2	
1911			3	1
1912	1		3	1
1913			2	
1914			2	
1915			11	2
1916 [1]	2		8	
Total	6	1	32	5

[1] The figures for 1916 are not complete.

His conclusions are as follows:

1. Rocky Mountain spotted fever has existed in California for a much longer period and to a far greater extent than has hitherto been supposed.
2. There are probably five main infected areas, one in Modoc County and four in Lassen.
3. The disease is not as severe in California as in Montana, nor as light as in Idaho.
4. The infection probably entered California through Nevada rather than Oregon.

ARSENIC IN "CHEMICALLY PURE" ZINC.

By Chester N. Myers, Organic Chemist, Division of Pharmacology, Hygienic Laboratory, United States Public Health Service.

In a study, by means of the Marsh test, of the arsenic content of various body fluids after the injection of salvarsan and arsenobenzol, it became necessary to secure a new supply of metallic zinc, the old supply, which had been proven to be arsenic-free, having been exhausted. Eight samples, which purported to be chemically pure, were examined. These all contained arsenic, though the statements on the labels indicated freedom from this element, the following designations being used: "As, Nil"; "As, none." Even after specifications were submitted requiring arsenic-free zinc, samples of impure zinc were received. The analyses which were being made dealt with amounts of arsenic varying from 1 to 7 parts per million; whereas in 10-gram samples of zinc, marked as previously indicated, amounts varying from 10 to 100 parts of metallic arsenic (1 to 10 parts per million of zinc) were found. The statements on the label of each of these samples indicated that the zinc had been analyzed and found to be free of arsenic. The control tests were carried out with 40 grams of zinc and four times the amount of sulphuric acid used in testing the zinc samples. In no case was any trace of arsenic observed. However, this is no indication that there was no arsenic present in this control sample. It does mean, however, that arsenic was not present in amounts as large as one part per million in 40 grams of zinc, since the procedure employed was capable of detecting amounts as small as this.

During the past two years, conditions have forced the manufacturers of chemicals to meet extraordinary demands. Those who use their products, either in the manufacture or the analysis of foodstuffs, should see to it that those chemicals and reagents are not contaminated; of this fact the label is not always sufficient or final evidence.

While in medicolegal examinations it is customary to control all procedures most rigidly, and doubtless chemists doing this kind